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EDGAR DEGAS

BRONZES
DRAWINGS, PASTELS

Exhibition arranged with the assistance
of MR. J. K. THANNHAUSER

JANUARY 3–27, 1945

BUCHHOLZ GALLERY
CURT VALENTIN
32 EAST 57TH STREET, NEW YORK

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The exhibition coincides with the publication of *Degas, Works in Sculpture, A Complete Catalogue. Edited by John Rewald.* Published by Pantheon Books Inc., New York.

12. II. 1945

In art nothing must seem accidental, not even motion.

One must treat the same subject ten times, even a hundred times.

It is the movement of things and people, which amuses me and even consoles me. If the leaves of trees did not move, how sad the trees would be and we too.

EDGAR DEGAS

EDGAR DEGAS

BY PAUL VALÉRY

DEGAS rejected *facility* just as he rejected everything that was not the sole object of his thoughts. He desired only his own approval, that is to say, to satisfy the most exigent, the harshest and most incorruptible of judges. No one more positively scorned honors, advantages, riches, and that glory which the writer can dispense to the artist so easily and with such generous heedlessness. He scathingly jeered those who put the fate of their work at the mercy of public opinion, of the established powers, or of commercial interests. As the true believer is concerned only with God, in whose sight all subterfuges, all deceits, all compromises or connivance, either of attitudes or appearances, count as naught, so he remained intact

and unchanging, subject only to the absolute idea which he held of his art. He wanted only that which he found most difficult to exact of himself. . . .

Despite the fact that he was born when "Romanticism" was at its height, that, about the time of his maturity, he perforce joined the "Naturalist" movement, consorted with Duranty, Zola, Goncourt, Duret, and exhibited with the first "Impressionists", he remained, nevertheless, one of those delightful *connoisseurs* — obstinately, voluptuously narrow, merciless toward novelties which have nothing but their novelty to recommend them, nourished by Racine and early music, given to quotations, classicist to the point of violence, extravagance and brilliance— unfortunately a vanished type nowadays. . . .

A man of taste, Degas was out of step with his times in this respect while by the genuine boldness and precision of his thought, he was far ahead of many of his artist contemporaries. He was one of the first to understand what the painter could learn from photography and what the painter must beware of borrowing from it. . . .

After long examination, all the arts deepen into insoluble problems. The prolonged gaze engenders infinite difficulties, and this creation of imaginary obstacles, of conflicting desires, of scruples and regrets, is proportionate, or even more than proportionate, to one's intelligence and one's knowledge. How can one choose sides between Raphael and the

Venetians, sacrifice Mozart to Wagner, Shakespeare to Racine? These perplexities hold nothing tragic for the amateur or the critic. For the artist they are pangs of conscience, renewed each time that he re-examines the work he has completed.

Degas finds himself caught between the precepts of Ingres and the strange fascination of Delacroix; while he hesitates, the art of his time decides to exploit the contemporary scene. Compositions in the Grand Manner become outmoded. Landscape invades the walls abandoned by the Greeks and the Turks, the Knights and the Cupids. It destroys the notion of *subject matter* and, in only a few years, reduces all the intellectual side of art to a few discussions about *matter* and the color of shadows. The mind becomes purely a retina and there can no longer be any question of trying, by one's brush, to express the feelings of some old men before a lovely Suzanna or the noble resistance of a great physician to whom millions are offered.

From *Degas Dance Dessin*, 1938

The fact is that, at one blow, Mr. Degas has overthrown the traditions of sculpture as he long ago has weakened the conventions of painting.

J. K. Huysmans, 1883

That's the thing, it is always the Greek, the Renaissance, against the tradition of French Gothic. *For we are nearer to the French Gothic, especially Degas.*

Camille Pissarro, Letters

. . . To think that we are living in an age that has produced a sculptor equal to the ancients . . .

Degas is the greatest sculptor. You should have seen a bas relief of his. . . . He just lets it crumble to pieces — . . . it was as beautiful as an antique. And that Ballet Dancer in wax . . . the mouth . . . just a suggestion, but what drawing.

Auguste Renoir *to* Ambroise Vollard
From Renoir, An Intimate Record.

1865-1881 BRONZES

1 Picking Apples
Bas relief
17¾" x 18¾". R* I

2 Horse at Trough
H. 6⅛". R II
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

3 Horse Standing
H. 11⅛". R III
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

4 Horse Walking
H. 8⅞". R IV
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

5 Horse Galloping
H. 11⅜". R VI

6 Horse Clearing an Obstacle
H. 11¼". R IX
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

7 Horse Walking
H. 8¼". R X
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

8 Horse Trotting
H. 8¼". R XI
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

9 Horse with Head Lowered
H. 7⅛". R XII
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

10 Rearing Horse
H. 12¼". R XIII

11 Prancing Horse
H. 10¼". R XVI

12 Horse with Jockey
H. 11¼". R XVII-XVIII
Lent by Mrs. Jules Mastbaum

13 Dancer. *Study in the Nude for Cat. No. 14*
H. 28½". R XIX
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

14 Ballet Dancer, Dressed
H. 39". R XX

*John Rewald. Degas, Works in Sculpture. A Complete Catalogue in which all 73 bronzes by Degas are illustrated.

1882-1885

15 Dancer at Rest
H. 14¼". R XXI
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

16 Dancer at Rest
H. 17⅛". R XXIII
Lent by Mrs. David Heyman

17 Dancer
H. 13¼". R XXV

18 The Tub
18¼" x 16½". R XXVII
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

19 Dancer
H. 16½". R XXVIII

20 Study for the Portrait of Mme. S.
H. 16½" (with base)
R XXX

21 Study for the Portrait of Mme. S.
H. 11" (with base)
R XXXI

22 Dancer Bowing
H. 8¼". R XXXII

23 Dancer with Tambourine
H. 10⅛". R XXXIV

24 Grande Arabesque, First Time
H. 10⅛". R XXXV

25 Grande Arabesque, Second Time
H. 19". R XXXVI

26 Arabesque over the Right Leg
H. 8". R XXXVII

27 Arabesque over the Right Leg
H. 11⅛". R XXXVIII

28 Grande Arabesque, Third Time
H. 17¼". R XXXIX

29 Grande Arabesque, Third Time
H. 15⅛". R XL

30 Arabesque over the Right Leg
H. 10¼". R XLI

31 Fourth Position Front
H. 22⅛". R XLIII

32 Spanish Dance
H. 17". R XLVII
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

33 Dancer, Rubbing her Knee
H. 12¼". R XLVIII
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

1896-1911

34 Dancer
H. 19¼". R XLIX

35 Woman Arranging her Hair
H. 18¼". R L

36 Woman Rubbing her Back
H. 19¼". R LI

37 Dressed Dancer at Rest
H. 16¼". R LII

38 The Bow
H. 13¼". R LIII

39 Woman taken Unawares
H. 16". R LIV

40 Dancer
H. 18¼". R LVI
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

41 Dancer
H. 17". R LVIII

42 Woman Getting out of the Bath
H. 17". R LIX

43 Dancer
H. 19¼". R LXI

44 Dancer
H. 19¼". R LXII

45 Woman Stretching
H. 14¼". R LXIV

46 Woman Washing her Left Leg
H. 5¼". R LXVII

47 Woman Washing her Left Leg
H. 7¼". R LXVIII

48 Seated Woman
H. 13¼". R LXIX

49 Woman Seated in an Armchair
H. 12½". R LXX

50 The Masseuse
H. 16¼". R LXXXIII

DRAWINGS AND PASTELS

51 Head of a Young Man
(Copy from a portrait by a 15th century painter)
1856-1857. Red crayon
11″ x 8¼″

52 Madonna and Child
(Study after a 15th century Milanese work)
1856-1857. Pencil
13¼″ x 10¼″

53 Standing Woman
Pencil. 11⅞″ x 8⅞″

54 Nude
11⅞″ x 8⅞″. Pencil

55 Young Woman
Charcoal. 12⅞″ x 7¼″

56 Nude
1857. Pencil. 12″ x 8″

57 Study for the Portrait of Julie Bertin
1863. Pencil. 14¼″ x 10¾″
The Fogg Museum of Art
(Paul J. Sachs Collection)

58 Study for the Portrait of Mme. Hertel
1864. Pencil. 14″ x 9¼″
The Fogg Museum of Art
(Paul J. Sachs Collection)

59 Study for the Portrait of Jules Finot
1868. Black Crayon
12½″ x 13¾″
The Fogg Museum of Art

60 Study of a Rider
Pencil. 17¼″ x 11¼″

61 Jockey
About 1870. Pencil
12¼″ x 9¼″

62 Ballet Dancer
About 1872
Charcoal and White
15″ x 10¼″
Lent by John S. Newberry, Jr.

63 A Ballet Dancer in Position
1872. Black Pencil
16⅛″ x 11¼″
The Fogg Museum of Art
(Paul J. Sachs Collection)

64 Half Length Study of a Woman
About 1874. Crayon
22⅞" x 20⅛"
The Fogg Museum of Art (Paul J. Sachs Collection)

65 Jockey
About 1875
Blue Chalk. 10½" x 9½"

66 Horse and Jockey
About 1875. Pencil
10½" x 9½"

67 Horse and Jockey
About 1875. Charcoal
15½" x 9"

68 Horse and Jockey
About 1875. Pencil
10½" x 7¾"

69 Study for the Portrait of Diego Martelli
1879. Black Crayon
17¾" x 11¼"
The Fogg Museum of Art (Paul J. Sachs Collection)

70 Study for Ballet Dancer (*see Catalogue No. 14*)
1879-1880. Charcoal
18½" x 22½"

71 Rider
1875-1880
Black Crayon. 9½" x 8½"

72 Seated Dancer
1880-1885
Charcoal and Wash
9½" x 12½"

73 Mlle. Lola at the Circus
About 1885. Charcoal
16½" x 8½"

74 Dancer
About 1890
Red Chalk. 14½" x 11"

75 After the Bath
1890-1892
Black Crayon. 19½" x 25⅛"
The Fogg Museum of Art (Paul J. Sachs Collection)

76 After the Bath
1890-1892. Crayon
31½" x 39½"
The Fogg Museum of Art (Paul J. Sachs Collection)

77 A Nude Figure Bathing
1890-1892. Crayon
25⅛" x 19½"
The Fogg Museum of Art (Paul J. Sachs Collection)

78 After the Bath
Pastel. 18½" x 23¾"

79 Jockey
(Portrait of Comte Lepic)
Pencil. 12" x 9"
Lent by Sam Salz

80 Dancer
Pencil. 13" x 18½"
Lent by Sam Salz

81 After the Bath
Charcoal. 21¼" x 22¼"

82 Dancer
About 1890
Charcoal. 24⅛" x 18⅞"

83 Dancer
Charcoal. 12¾" x 8¼"

84 Woman Reading
About 1900. Pastel
12¼" x 11"

85 The Bath
About 1900. Charcoal
9⅛" x 7⅛"

86 Seated Woman
1900-1910. Charcoal
27⅛" x 29⅛"